



## INTRODUCTION

Ros Crendor is a land surrounded by mystery and secrecy. Often referred to as Lepajé (“the Lands”) by the fierce boccord tribes that inhabit the area, Ros Crendor offers a great variety of geographical features, mysterious history, dreaded ruins and a secluded culture. Powerful priestesses rule the lands through a strict matriarchal system and tribal bonds are strong. All the neighbours of Ros Crendor have felt its barbaric fury and most covet their secrets. Few, however, know the true extent of these secrets and the true and ancient history of this rugged realm.

## GEOGRAPHY

The northern coast is the most densely populated area of Ros Crendor, although towns still are scarce and small in comparison to Burdorth or Heridoth. The Shield Mountains protect the central parts of Ros Crendor from the fierce crith winds of the Vosule Sea and forces most of the rain to fall on its fertile northern slopes. Some coastal communities are simple fishing villages, while others, like Ro-Obiss, are ancient cities bustling with activity and contact with the world outside Ros Crendor. Some cities and ruins along the coast date back to when the bronth and tologra lived in the land. Some, like Ro-Obiss, date back even further, to the time of the dreaded Dreamlords.

The eastern parts of Ros Crendor connect with the Border Kingdoms, serving as a buffer between Ros Crendor and Burdorth and protected by the latter. Traditionally, Burdorthian forces would enter Ros Crendor along this coast to stop or retaliate against tribal raids. The southern stretch of the east coast opens up to lush fields, forests and swift rivers originating in the Hit’tike Mountains.

The central parts of Ros Crendor are also heavily populated. The area is however very dry and often quite dusty during mullin. The Crack Lands are riddled with small communities dug into the cliff sides and entire underground villages. Many ancient ruins dot the landscape, and quite a few mountains display signs of ancient habitation or hold strangely carved formations or depictions on the mountain sides. These are the haunted halls and tombs of the Dreamlords. Most notable of these is Grave Mountain and Prison Mountain.



Some of the old ruins are taboo and avoided, others are guarded by priestesses. Quite a few, however, are inhabited by the boccord tribes and expanded far beyond their original size. Strong winds have twisted the landscape and the flora, as well as forced the necessity of

underground dwellings. Dust storms strike suddenly and earthquakes are often felt.

The southern parts of Ros Crendor would actually be referred to by most as the Doben-al. Nonetheless, nomadic boccord tribes inhabit these harsh places and claim it as part of Ros Crendor. These tribes occasionally raid the Border Kingdoms and sometimes even the Ros Crendorian tribes of the east coast. Sand deserts, mixed with stone flats and sterile mountain valleys fill most of the area. Water and plants are scarce and rain is an exception. However, the priestesses of the Earth Mother are a strong presence here. Many places and ruins are taboo. Nowhere else are the secrets of the priestesses better guarded from prying eyes, than in the middle of an inhospitable desert. In this area the sho-sen is weak or acts strangely. Most notable of these place are the Dark Lands, filled with strange skyrealms and the ruins of the Scorched Plains. The tribes of this area are the most feared and most elusive of the Ros Crendorians. Their ways differ from the rest of the Ros Crendorian tribes due to the influence of other people such as the Lunghoth and the crugar tribes. Sandstorms out of the deserts and the feared Man-Taliga storms are well-known in these parts. The strange formations and holes of the peaks of the central mountain range create an eerie howling noise during stormy nights that have given rise to many legends and superstitions.



*The Dark Lands*

The broad plain that divides the Pagra Mountains from the ominous Mountains of the Howling Winds is sterile, dusty and dead. It is filled with stumps and pieces of dead, petrified trees, referred to as the Forest of Stone. Evil spirits and ghosts are known to haunt this place that unfortunately serves as an alternative passageway between the east coast and western Ros Crendor. Caravans of priestesses and their guards are often seen on their way to or from the sacred town Obiss.

The north-western parts of Ros Crendor is covered by misty, old brynkwood forests. The brynkwood trees, being Jorune's largest, have created a forest of gigantic proportions. Many of Jorune's great beasts still reside in this primordial forest and humans are but a recent and minor addition. Some beasts, originally created by the Dreamlords, roam in the depths of the forest, as well as some things that can not be called neither plant nor beast.

West of the great brynkwood forests are the lush river plains that stretch to Lake Creydon and Lake Dau-Uh-Dey. No mountains to the north stop the wet weather of the Vosule Sea, making it excellent farmlands. It is these fertile lands that have been the reason for the Khodre's historical attempts to expand its vast territory. The tribes inhabiting these lands are of various sorts. Some are fishermen of the sea, lakes and

rivers, or hunters and gatherers of the Brynkwood forest. Others are farmers or even raiders of the civilised world.

The south-western part of Ros Crendor is a mix of rolling grass plains (known for the high Launshil grass and called the Green Sea) between steep mountains with high eerie peaks. These lands are strangely enough not suitable for farming and the tribes in this region have historically been known for their raids upon their neighbours and across Lake Dau-Uh-Dey. The southern part of this region borders on deep forests dotted with small lakes and rivers. This is the Land of the Acubon. Accepted as the lands of the fiercely territorial acubon, it is a powerful ally and barrier against intruders to Ros Crendor's south-western parts.

Many skyrealms can be found in Ros Crendor or can be seen roaming over the lands. Most of these are natural, but some display unnatural isho signatures to those that examine them. South of Ros Crendor, in the northern part of the Doben-al, a ring of skyrealms can be found. Shantic ruins displaying a historic destruction can be found on many skyrealms, as well as some more arcane and dangerous ruins originating from the Dreamlords.

All over Ros Crendor, especially in the south central parts, signs of massive energy destruction is evident in the form of blasted plains, petrified forests, crumbled mountain peaks, naked hills and fallen skyrealms. Most well known and feared among these is the Scorched Plains and the Valley of Curses. The deserts of Doben-al have often claimed these areas and slowly creep northward every year.

The strange destruction can also be felt by the isho sensitive. Many isho "scars" are present throughout Ros Crendor. Most of these coincide with the ancient ruins of the Dreamlords. The sho-sen of especially central and southern Ros Crendor is very unstable and isho storms are common. Many other strange isho phenomena have also been documented, such as dark warps, "poisonous" isho, isho pumping, waning isho, totally isho free areas and "stagnant" isho. The closeness of the Doben-al makes geothermal phenomena very common throughout south and central Ros Crendor. Without doubt there is much studying to be done by cajis and querrids if they were allowed to roam free in the lands.

## FLORA AND FAUNA

The most remarkable part of Ros Crendor's flora is undoubtedly the great Brynkwood Forest. The forest is truly primordial with huge brynkwood trees towering more than 80 metres up in the air and with trunks up to 10 metres in diameter. Most of the vegetation of this forest is of equally huge proportion and most picturesque are probably the huge mushroom patches, the beard-like growths hanging from the trees and the isho gliding pollen capsules that float through the misty, haunted forest.

In the deep reaches of the forest even stranger plants can be found. Some only grow close to ancient overgrown ruins left behind by the Dreamlords, while others seem to roam around, more like animals than plants. Most notable of these are the Mengelin, a larger and more dangerous cousin of the trinnu beagle trap.

The Mandare Tree, a single stem or sometimes parasite stem of a tree, which is a vicious plant-creature that swings down suddenly to grab prey in its great jaw. Boccord hunters claim that Mandare Trees are very hard to spot as their signatures blend in with the surrounding trees. Many of Jorune's bigger predators such as mandare, dreglamon, duradon, manéttica, and off course, the legendary corondon can be found in the forest. Mantibra can be found in abundance as well as the shy, slender forest dothobider which are the boccord hunters favourite choice of game. To the delight of the boccord hunters, the Brynkwood Forest seems totally free of tarros.

Along the eastern coast of Lake Creydon and in other lakes of western Ros Crendor, dichandra can be found. Sometimes a menace for villages if they get too many, they are not hunted by thivin to the brink of extinction as in other parts of northern Jorune. An abundance of fish and fresh water crustaceans can also be found in abundance in the lake. Local superstition, fuelled by the fact that no acubon make their homes in the lake, say that a great beast lives in its deep.



*Mengelin (above) and Mandare Tree (below)*



Large patches of tumbernaw vines take over where the Brynkwood forest ends to the east. These huge and thorny tree-like vines stretch several miles and far into the central, drier parts of Ros Crendor. The tumbernaw vines are sometimes used for natural fencing and living construction material by the Korrum tribes. Among the tumbernaw, close to the open plains or in the craggy mountains, lairs of the dreaded duradon can be found. Just like in Essanja, the population in this area took to living underground for fear of these great predators that easily could demolish a house or hut. From the Mountains of the Howling Wind packs of wolves sometimes enter human lands during harsh winters or severe draughts. Among the tumbernaw it is not uncommon to find cougars, huge burrows of pibber and the universally hated scragger.

The Crack Lands main vegetation is found in the dried out riverbeds where it still is somewhat moist. Gnarly trees and thorny shrubs are common. Dharmee roam the countryside for prey and often venture into the sparse fields created by humans in the dried out riverbeds.

The great Launshil grass of south-western Ros Crendor is sometimes referred to as the Green Sea by the Manjere tribes. The great green stalks reach over three meters in height on the central plains and sway peacefully in the breeze. Grooves of trees and other shrubs are often seen growing on stony hills or rocky outcroppings where they are safe from the asphyxiating grass. The Green Sea is, however, all but peaceful. Amongst it live many dharmee, loosh spin their webs between the grass stems, saka scuttle between the grass stems and packs of pagra wolves hunt during the nights. The pagra wolves are known for their acute tra-sense, which they use to locate their prey among the high grass. Beasters pay very good money for pagra wolf cubs that can be trained into excellent guard beasts or warp hunters. A myriad of birds also seek refuge in the high grass and create a symphony of noise as they fly over the grass plains.

The rocky, coastal region of Ros Crendor has a weather-torn appearance. Boohrem trees add to this appearance by being twined and storm-bent away from the stormy sea. Shorter and hardier plants grow in these wind-torn forests. The thick, heavy leaves of Leather Leaf Hariss is for example dried and used as roof tiles by the fishermen of the region. The great sea kelp known as Sailor's Rest makes the swirling waters along the cliff coasts hazardous. Entire ships get stuck in its entangling reeds and it is suicide to swim amongst it. The stems bearing the bright red flowers of the kelp cling to rocks and spread far away from the water. The red flowers make the otherwise barren cliffs beautiful, but often become so many that entire fishing villages have had to relocate. Poidill have always been a nuisance along this coast, as they seem to enjoy the kelp to nest and hunt in. Most harbours therefore have problems with both and regularly have to clear the waters of this nuisance.

Among the secluded smaller vales or gorges along the coast, lush forests with thick undergrowth grow in abundance. Fed by the rain that falls in the mountains, fern-like bushes the size of houses grow in patches among the trees. Countless streams flow down from the mountains over falls and rapids to the sea.

The south-east parts of the coast, neighbouring the Border Kingdoms, is lush and filled by wet forests and countless streams. Much land here has been converted to fields or orchards.



A strange feature of the Ros Crendor landscape is the Hagra Cluster of Lowater Sometimes referred to as the Bone Forest. It is a large colony of bony white coral that lives on land. Small, curiously humanoid insects known as Hagroo have built this enormous construct that stretches across a vast area. Its origin and purpose is unknown and sajantists have noted that the insects themselves have no signatures, thus proving their relation to other creatures associated with the Dreamlords. Early tologran tribes carved tunnels and dwellings through the lofty coral structure that sometimes can be up to 10 metre high. It offered excellent protection from the duradon of the area and other predators. Even today it is partly inhabited, but the old tologran tunnels are revered as the work of ancient nature spirits and their carved depictions of tolograns used for worship. Over the last hundred years a small covenant of priestesses have guarded a denser part of the Hagra Cluster and declaring it taboo. Rumours state that this is in fact the centre of the cluster and a covered old ruin of the Dreamlords. The priestesses have simply declared it to be the heart and essence of the Hagra, referring to the Cluster as one being.



*The male and female Hagroo*



The deserts and dry, rocky lands of south-central Ros Crendor is not void of life. Crill glide on the hot winds, searching for prey. Harns, dharmeee, talen fields, swarms of darrit and many other creatures fight for the scarce resources to be found in these lands. Other more sinister creatures lurk in old deserted ruins, such as the ghoulish Perenn creatures, and the thing most commonly known as The Pit Beast or the Goddess Navel by its worshippers. These beasts are descendants from creatures once brought to the world or created by the Dreamlords. They seem to spread slowly outward from the central parts of Doben-al through subterranean caves or passages, and their life spans seem vast. [See *The Lamorri* essay for more details.]

## **HISTORY**

### *Ancient history*

Ancient shantic legends speak of the Doben-al as a rich and lush area full of deep forests, flowing great rivers and fertile plains. The area was known for its many skyrealms, strong sho-sen and beautiful shantic cities. Traces of a great river can still today be seen, which flowed from southern Ros Crendor, through the Doben-al and ending in the mighty dead canyons of Sobayid. Now, all that remains are dried-out canyons and riverbeds. It is clear that something changed this lush region into the barren and desert place it is today.

Long before the humans arrived, the Doben-al had become what it is today and earned its shantic name ("Great Emptiness"). Ros Crendor converges on the Doben-al and

seems to have suffered some of the same effects. Priestesses speak of the Dreamlords and how they ruled the lands and later fought the shanta. The barren wastelands of Doben-al hold the physical scars as well as the isho scars to prove it. [See *The Lamorri* essay for more details]

### *Terran history*

The lands were first settled by the migrating Iscin Races. Crugar mainly passed south of Ros Crendor along the Thodic Mountains. The bronth and tologra have legends how they fled the cruel crugar lords who had enslaved them and traversed the burning sands to the Howling Mountains. This probably describes their exodus from the Gauss Valley across the northern Doben-al. The blount seem to have partly travelled with the crugar, as they could not have survived the deserts. This would be in line of the blount “treason” theory referred to in many Iscin Legends. Some ancient bronth records, however, speak of Five Wise Blount that travelled with the bronth to Ros Crendor. The old texts reveal no clues to what happened to these. However it happened, blount very slowly spread to swamp areas in Burdoth, around Lake Dau-Uh-Dey, the south-western Doben-al and to Temauntro. The bronth and tologra, however, found no other races inhabiting the lands and the game bountiful in the northern and coastal regions.

- 210 PC      (date approx.) First group of bronth and tologra enter Ros Crendor from the south-east. The bronth settle mainly along the coast, while the tologra travel inland and settle the crack lands and the Hagra Cluster. The rest of the land remains uninhabited. Coastal communities flourish and bronth start experimenting with seafaring.
  
- 280 PC      (date approx.) The second group of bronth enter Ros Crendor from the south-west. They have travelled with the blount who stayed along the shores of Lake Dau-uh-dey. The second group discovers the immense brynk hardwood forests and settle along its fringes.
  
- 290 PC      Bronth language first set to print, using a script derived from the terran standard alphabet. The script was named Bruhdas. This is the first time bronth (already at that time known as The Preservers of Iscin’s Lore) record anything in a non-English script. Ancient scrolls from this time, found in an old bronth tomb close to Dobharah, are today kept in Ros Crendor and called the Hoodhoruu scrolls. In the scrolls, the bronth refer to the lands as Crendor and speak somewhat about tologra also living there. Later readers of this script long regarded tolograns as mythical creatures.
  
- 302 PC      The “Lambruh” (Spirit Jailers) sect is established by the bronth in order to further investigate and protect the people of Crendor from the malignant spirits sharing their lands.
  
- 400 - 490 PC      A combination of shantic violence, a religious exodus, plagues and the fact that better lands were found, lead to the slow desertion of Crendor. More and more bronth settlers sail to the virgin lands of what is



to become Dobre, while tolograns start to learn seafaring from the bronth, from whom they have distanced themselves by living in the central parts of the land. Bronth start referring to the lands as Ros Crendor (Old Crendor). The more social bronth migrate together, in tight nit family groups.

- 490 PC (date by tradition) A great colonising armada of bronth and tolograns (protected together from the emerging threat of the ramian) set out from Ros Crendor. A great storm (maybe just the legends explaining that the races actually travelled separately) separates the Iscin Races. Bronth make it to the new colonies, while tolograns are lost to history until 3498. Some bronth, mainly members of the Lambruh sect and their servants, remain in the coastal cities of Ro-Obiss, Dobharah and Hoodha (now Makvar).
- 500 PC Some humans of the Fransei Tribes travel through Ros Crendor but never settle in numbers, except for the western parts, around the shores of Lake Dau-Uh-Dey and Lake Creydon.
- 750 PC Boccord tribes, sub-tribes of the Fransei Tribes, maybe created by outcasts from the Age of Monsters, start settling the lands to the east. They slowly spread through the more fertile parts of Ros Crendor and come in peaceful contact with the bronth still living there. The Fransei-speaking boccord often refer to Ros Crendor as Lepaje (“the Lands”). The Lambruh sect starts training boccord disciples. Mainly women are chosen.
- 820 PC First ramian ships scout the coast and small exploration parties, led by ramian priest are sent inland.
- 939 PC The last of the Lambruh sect members leave Ros Crendor. Guardianship over the lands, especially the Dreamlord Tombs, is transferred to the boccord female priesthood that has evolved.
- 1200-1400 PC The boccord tribes of Ros Crendor spread all over the realm and in some instances begin to raid each other. Their numbers increase rapidly and some of them take to raiding the non-boccord tribes along the east coast (what is to become the Coastal Kingdoms).
- 1400-1700 PC A series of plagues strike hard at the Ros Crendorian tribes. Only the nomadic Tokrem tribes seem unaffected, while larger population centres are broken down as people flee to the countryside. Only the priestesses travel between villages and the tribes develop a healthy aversion to towns.
- 2029 PC The Lunghoth clash with the Tokrem tribes as their cyclic wandering take them into Ros Crendor. The Lunghoth remain for less than 50 years. The tribes unite under a High Priestess for the first time.
- 2192 PC A large portion of the Korrum tribes enter the northern territories of the Vucian Empire and establish smaller kingdoms along the coast. Many skirmishes ensue. This is the beginning of the Coastal Kingdoms.

- 2482 PC An expanding Carissey (now Khodre) tries to conquer the fertile western parts of Ros Crendor. For the first time the tribes show their awesome united power and expel the invaders. A time of organised border raiding from both parties commence. From this time the fierceness of the boccord raiders and fear of their coming starts spreading throughout Carissey. The forts along the Border Hills are erected by the Carisseans to protect them from the Ros Crendor barbarians.
- 2529 PC The Lunghoth once again return to southern Ros Crendor. The High Priestess manages to negotiate a truce between them and the Tokrem tribes. The Lunghoth pay tribute to live in Ros Crendor. They remain for less than 50 years.
- 2542 PC Carissey wages a second war upon Ros Crendor to stop the raiding and claims the land beyond the border hills. Once again the clans unite to a powerful force and repel the invaders. The forts of the Border Hills are taken and placed under the guardianship of the Manjere tribe.
- 2866 PC An evil High Priestess instates human sacrifices in 2500. Religion is “tainted” at this time and worship turns to “The Old Gods”, “Immortal Spirits of the Underground” or the “Dreamlords”. Human sacrifices are raided from neighbouring lands (especially from the Border Kingdoms and northern Carissey). Many raids are also conducted upon the Gauss Valley in Burdoth. Strange devices and “demonic advisors” make the united Ros Crendorians dangerous. Only the inhabitants of the western brynkwoods of Ros Crendor seem unwilling to submit to the Dark Rule.
- 2959 PC The Dark Rule lasts less than 100 years before an uprising (led by loyal priestesses of the Earth Mother and burdothian/carissean aid) end it. The Sychillian fleet take Ro-Obiss and Ardisian soldiers drive the Ros Crendorians away from the Border Kingdoms. Burdoth and Carissey both require “tribute prisoners” from the ruling tribes after this time. The practice is only honoured for 101 years. Only the priestesses know that the amount of “possessed” by lamorri “spirits” was record high during this time.
- 3012 PC The Lunghoth return to south-eastern Ros Crendor. The Tokrem and the Lunghoth meet peacefully for the first time as both show respect for their neighbours. Marriages and cultural influences are exchanged. The Lunghoth stay for less than 50 years.
- 3113 PC During the ramian invasion of Burdoth and Dobre, a part of the occupation force is sent to Ros Crendor. Most coastal town are conquered and the High Priestess flees from Ro-Obiss. Ramian priests start a disturbing activity among the old lamorri ruins, (especially grave mountain which has been active ever since). Ramian forces are however forced from the land by the eelshon she-evid, which is attracted to the lamorri activity. Fear drives the ramian from the land now known to them as “Volkere Chorka “Lands of the Great Stalker”.

- 3386 PC Boru and Ros Crendorian relations increase. Scholars start exchanging lore and a bronth school is established in Ros Crendor. Bronth iscin are slowly introduced to the ancient mysteries of the lands again.
- 3425 PC Ros Crendorians unite to repel the crugar from their south-western lands. The crugar and the southern Ros Crendorian tribes and some of the fransei tribes, however, make a pact. The crugar are allowed to pass unmolested. Some boccord raiding parties take advantage of the crugar confusion and start raiding the Gauss Valley and Sobayid. Southern Ros Crendor slips out of the control of the High Priestess.
- 3440 PC When driving the crugar back eastward, Khodre Allonkarb's forces are attacked by Ros Crendorian tribes allied to the crugar and the fransei tribes or otherwise raiding in the Doben-al. A small burdothian naval force later destroys the town of Makvar to set an example. The High Priestess assumes control over the usurping clans and declares that tribute prisoners from the southern tribes shall once again be sent to Burdoth for 101 years.
- 3497 PC New ramian priests and small raiding parties show an interest in Ros Crendor during the invasion of Burdoth and Dobre. The High Priestess is disturbed by this and receives warnings about the ramian activities all over the world by Choi Sternhand of the Silent Ramian of Jasp.

## PEOPLE

### *The tribes*

Approximately 80% of the Ros Crendorian inhabitants are boccord and members of the five main tribes

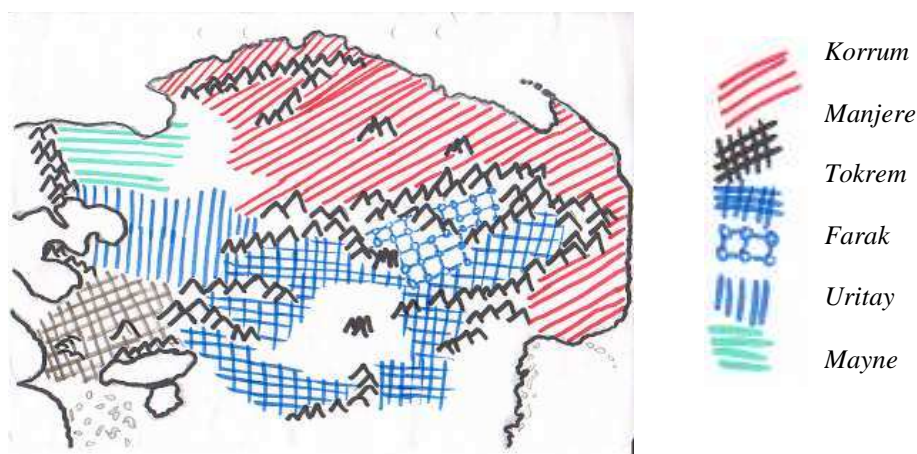
- Korrum The most numerous tribe inhabiting the central, north and eastern parts. The inland Korrum favour sturdy leather clothes and always wear their beards or hair long. Both men and women have many tattoos symbolising their tribes, their families and their kree. The Korrum and the tribes south of the dividing mountains have the stereotypical appearance of the uncouth boccord barbarians known throughout the Civilised Lands. The Korrum of the east coast have more delicate clothes, often traded from Burdothians or Jaspian and sometimes wear their hair short. Korrum are known for their singing and their hard, tenacious labour.
- Manjere The people of the south-western parts of Ros Crendor. Appointed guardians of the Border Hills forts. Known for their fierceness and occasional raiding during bad times outside Ros Crendor. Known historically to have been ritual cannibals (hence their name "Eaters"). The traditions of matriarchy is weakest among these tribe and their ways have been corrupted by the bad sides of the neighbouring Khodren civilisation.

**Tokrem** The main bulk of the southern desert tribes. Savage and unruly people with many secrets, these tribes know the deserts like nobody else. They travel far into the Doben-al and have strong ties to the other Fransei tribes inhabiting the Doben-al. Some of the Tokrem tribes are sacred guardians of the most holy (or unholy) places of the Terrameer cult. Tokrem chieftains are always women and it is not uncommon to find women as leaders of the hunters. Their isho sensitivity skills and their accuracy with the great Ros Crendorian longbows is legendary. Tokrem wear simple and sturdy clothes and tattoo themselves on most body parts.

**Uritay** The tribes inhabiting the old forests and fertile riverlands of central-western Ros Crendor. They live of the rich farmlands and the goods and game found in the great brynkwood forests. They, and their traditional rivals, the Mayne tribes, are the richest among the Ros Crendorian tribes, due to their trade with the Khodrens along the shores of Lake Creidon. Uritay tribesmen have a reputation to be fat and lazy farmers. In reality, the Uritay have great respect for the religion and ways of Ros Crendor. They are the one that have suffered all the invasions of the Khodrens and know how close to a potential enemy they are. Uritay tribesmen often decorate themselves with jewellery to display their wealth. The women especially. For the Uritay, it is reasonable to carry ones wealth close to the body.

**Mayne** Another great tribe inhabiting the old forests and fertile riverlands of north-western Ros Crendor. They are traditional rivals of the Uritay tribes whom they often engage in series of cattle theft and village raids. The Mayne tribes trade with foreigners along the northern sea coast and their trade is dependant largely upon the logging of brynk hardwood from the forest. The Mayne tribes are known for wearing heavy coats to protect them from the heavy rains that often come in from the Vosule Sea.

Many sub-tribes exist within the larger with individual names of the large family units.



The remainders of the populace are half-breeds or strangers residing in the lands. Most notable and respected among these are the bronth scholars of Ro-Obiss and the foreign merchants of the port towns.

### *Society*

Ros Crendorian society is matriarchal and social status is traditionally based upon “kree” (worthiness). A person with valuable skills in the society (carpenter, hunter, fadri) gains kree and automatically receives more credibility and votes in any tribal council. Women automatically receive kree because they are creators of life. Women tattoo pictographic details about their offspring and kree around their necks. High kree

is often permanently marked on individuals as tattoos and the persons might be referred to as GranKree (a modern entren substitute for this word is “DharKree”).



*A woman, displaying her kree and lineage.*

Females are often selected as tribal leaders and are always considered the head of a family. Lore masters (Mothers of Wisdom), scribes and healers are also predominantly female, while labouring occupations and hunters often are male (with the exception of the Tokrem who are known for their fierce female hunters and warriors). Only women are allowed to be members of the clergy, which has spiritual authority over all other rulers.

The lands are loosely ruled by the High Priestess of the Earth Mother in Ro-Obiss. The various tribes are tightly knit together by the powerful religious ruling caste. All must answer to the High Priestess”, who has returned to the Earth Mother’s womb and best knows her will”.

The High Priestess is currently an 89-year old priestess called Cassica KreeKarrac.

Tribes rule their lands nearly autonomous, but answer to a local Pajé Protégé (Land Protector). The tribes are fiercely territorial and regarded as uncivilised by most other cultures. Many are hunters and gatherers with simple farming needs. The Uritay and Mayne tribes are an exception living in fertile farmlands. Only coastal and lake shore areas have proper towns.

The maturing ceremony of “farsé” is strong in the land as well as the use of the huge boccord longbow called “boolanj” in fransei. Among many tribes one cannot be considered an adult until one has mastered either the boolanj or the signature skills, known among the tribes as “Respir” (“Breathing”).

Houses are often dug into the porous mountains, cliffs, canyons and hills (a la Cappadocia on Earth). This is especially true around the crack lands where duradon are a serious threat or in the hotter desert regions in order to avoid the heat. In the great brynkwood forests many homes are carved into the living tree and augmented with platforms among the branches. On the open river lands houses of wood or stone are preferred, often partially underground to protect from predators and hard winds. Many small skyrealms dot the lands with structures carved into them. Those that are not taboo have sometimes been used by the tribes and original dwellings have been extended by the boccord. Most notable of these are The Twins, which harbours the wooden palace and a town of a crazy Uritay chieftain who sought to become like the sages he had seen in Burdoth and Khodre.

### *Commerce*

Barter is still the most common way of trading in Ros Crendor. A carefully regulated system of Debt Notices is however common, especially among the Korrum tribes. Raw gems are accepted in most towns. Along the borders to Khodre it is common to see tribesmen accepting gemules and gemlinks.

### *Law and order*

The tribes take care of their own. The smaller the tribe the easier it is for the chieftains to settle disputes. This is especially true for the Tokrem tribes of southern Ros Crendor. The other, more numerous tribes have special courts, Kree Coors, which assemble four times a year to solve serious disputes. The Kree Coors consist of wise men and chieftains of GranKree and at least one priestess. Here cattle thefts, murders, debts and other wrongs can be amended or settled. This courts normally assemble in the closest town and altogether the court will exist for one or two weeks depending on the size of the area. During this time people tend to flock to the towns to sell or buy their goods or meet with other important persons of society. Grand markets spring to life and merchants from far away places appear out of nowhere. With so many GranKree and priestesses in the town man also take the opportunity to marry (only allowed by the priestesses during eris and mullin). If a foreigner is suspected of a crime, the court will normally assemble for just that occasion. This has been ordered by the High-Priestess.

Smaller disputes that the tribe elders find can be settled fairly by the village/tribal GranKree and the Chieftain normally don't have to wait for the KreeCoors.

Larger towns, such as Ro-Obiss, Tallor, Mervis and Kerteyga have permanent courts called GranKree Coors. Permanent "judges" reside here and are normally appointed for life among the older and wiser members of society. The KreeCoor of Kerteyga is known to be corrupt and a foreigner would never win a case or leave with his riches intact if he ever ended up there.

If a person is found guilty of taking an others life, the perpetrators life become the property of the victims closest family. They may choose his punishment, but generally have two or more options presented by the KreeCoor to choose from. The perpetrator may be condemned to death or may become the slave of the victim's family and make up for the loss of income, labour etc. His years of servitude may be decided by the KreeCoor. In some cases the perpetrator may be imprisoned for life in Prison Mountain, but this is considered especially cruel by most of the tribes. This is also the case when the punishment has not yet been decided or the KreeCoor not yet has been assembled. Normally a family has a full year of mourning to decide upon the punishment. They must at least spend one season (crith, mullin etc) of mourning before they decide the punishment, so that a rash decision is not made.

### *Language*

All inhabitants of Ros Crendor speak Fransei. Although dialects may differ somewhat, the Ros Crendor Tribes speak two main dialects. Creydonian is spoken by the Uritay, Mayne and Manjere tribes, while the more numerous Korrum tribes speak the more well-known Crendorian dialect. The nomadic Tokrem tribes to the southeast speak either the Crendorian dialect or the Tribal Fransei spoken by other non-boccord tribes of the Doben-al. Their mish-mash of dialects are often the hardest to understand by speakers of Fransei.

Fransei was traditionally never written and most tribes of the Doben-al are illiterate, having a powerful oral tradition of singing and story telling. When the priestesses of Ros Crendor came into contact with the Burdotherian cultures they adopted most of the entren alphabet. Following the tradition of arcane symbols used by the priestesses, Fransei is now written with the Entren alphabet but in columns from top to bottom, beginning from the right. Some new letters, representing unique sounds in the Fransei language, have been added to the alphabet.

Most of the people in Ros Crendor are still illiterate, leaving writing matters to special scribes (in the cities), the priestesses, Sijantists or tribe Mothers of Wisdom.

Quite a few Ros Crendorians living in border towns or in one of the major trading ports know how to speak some Entren.

Some priestesses have, through obscure ways (most of them originating from the Dark Times), learnt how to read the chaotic glyphs of the lamorri (that also are written from top to bottom).

[See *Languages of Jorune* essay for additional details.]

## RELIGION

The religion of Ros Crendor is surprisingly uniform. This is largely due to a powerful priesthood, which also rules the lands. The belief of the Ros Crendorians is called “Terrameer” in Fransei and Cult of the Earth Mother in Entren. It is a mixture of naturalistic, Iscin and shantic beliefs with an alarming degree of lamorri influence.

At the centre of the religion is the Earth Mother who is synonymous to the earth or the world. It is she who gives life to all things, birthing it from her great womb. She is not good or evil but an order of natural chaos. Among her children are the Old Ones (shantas), animals, plants and certain geographical features seen as individuals, such as mountains, hills, lakes, rivers, forests etc. Major geographical features such as the sky, the earth(soil) and the sea are seen as part of her body (her breath, body and hair). Even spirits and smaller local deities are her children. Most noted among these are Fire, the Seven Moons and the various Winds. The Earth Mother herself (Terrameer) cannot be asked favours. She can only be pleased or made content. A balance is sought. Her children, on the other hand, can be interacted with. Their nature, personality and traits vary. The stars in the sky symbolise other great universal beings, like the Earth Mother. They are her cousins. The darkness between them is their enemies. It tries to constrict and strangle the Earth Mother every night, but always ends up loosing at dawn.

Like mould infests a tree, the Earth Mother has been tainted. Some of the other universal beings (the stars) were envious of her beauty and sent their children to disturb the Earth Mother. These are the Dreamlords, restless sprits or ghosts who once fought the Old Ones. The Earth Mother now holds them imprisoned deep within herself, their spirits degenerating and rotting from selfish and heartless beings to truly evil and malicious spirits. Their kingdom once stretched over Ros Crendor and the vast desert.

Other universal beings also sent their children to wreak havoc upon the Earth Mother. They tried to mould creatures out of her flesh and impose their will upon it. Thus the other speaking races were created, humans among them. Many immediately



recognised the Earth Mother for what she was and turned away from their creators to abide her rules and the greater balance. Some did not.

Only females are allowed into the clergy. The reasons for this are obscured in the mists of time, but one of them are claimed to be the fact that women gain wisdom from being in touch with the Earth Mother and are created in her image. Also, the Guardianship over the land can only be conducted safely by women, as the land's inherited evil spirits easily corrupt men for some reason. Men can at the most be Sijantists (iscins), but are generally not allowed to delve into religious matters.

A priestess is not allowed to marry, but will bear children. No higher rank can be achieved without the experience of creating a life. She will choose a suitable man, which is a great honour and stay with him until she is pregnant. If a boy is born he will be raised by the father. If it is a girl, she will be taken away and be raised to be a priestess of the Earth Mother. Many cruel jokes have been made by outsiders about the secret ceremonies where priestesses choose fathers for their children.

The priestesses are trained in a holy convent called "LiManch" (the Arm [of the Earth Mother]) situated upon a peninsula of Lake Eelish. All males who set foot upon the peninsula are punished by death. The great Library of LiManch is known in many legends, although no one, except for the boccord priestesses, ever seem to have seen its halls.

Priestesses are revered and feared by the tribes of Ros Crendor for their mystical and dreaded secrets, but also for their daring journeys into the bowels of the Earth Mother and into places that are taboo. Without the priestesses the lands would be very dangerous indeed. They also know practical secrets about the making of limilates, midwifery, diseases, the controlling of pregnancies and the weaknesses of the flesh.

Priestesses are not evil or rule the populace by fear. Tribal leaders (some of them even men) rule the lands. Priestesses serve as very influential advisors, but try not to meddle too much with politics (The High-Priestess of Ro-Obiss being the exception).

Many of the priestesses often serve as marriage councillors, solvers of domestic disputes and upholders of Ethics. Their skills in seduction and usage of male weaknesses can also be great.

The most important task of the priestesses is to uphold the delicate balance that is the Earth Mother (Her body is the land, her hair the sea, her breath the air and isho). Certain acts, physical or ethical, disrupt the balance. The priestesses also serve as communicators and mediators between the Earth Mother's Children, her own or adopted. (Shantas, spirits and animals are her children, while humans and the Iscin races are converted and adopted as they came from the Earth Mother's Cousins among, the stars, to destroy her land).

The most dangerous task, however, is to protect the Earth Mother and all her Children from the Children of the Earth Mother's cousins. Among these, the Dreamlords are the most feared. In accordance to their belief, the priestesses sacredly guard the old Dreamlord ruins found in Ros Crendor so that mankind will be safe from these fiends.



They also guard the lands because it is dangerous to the unwary and holds many dangerous secrets hidden underground. This ancient task was inherited from the bronth guardians, “Lambruh” (Spirit Jailers), who occupied the land before the tribes.

The priestesses have strict ranks among themselves, which is required in order to effectively sustain guardianship over the lands. Transition from one rank to another requires experience (spiritually and biologically, for example, by creating life and aging), deeds or special omens from the Earth Mother.

### **Priestess ranks**

Novice (Debuté)  
Priestess (Préteess)  
Clan Mother (Meer Deklaan)  
Mother of Wisdom (Meer Sagéss)  
Lambruhjin (Priestesses expert on Dreamlords)  
Agari (Holy Condrij fighting Dreamlord powers)  
Reverend Mother (Meer Reverans)  
High Guardian (Stuard)  
High-Priestess (Meer GranKree or Meer-Obiss)



*Agari condrij*

The most sacred places of the Terrameer worshippers are guarded by priestesses who often inhabit these places as well. The tribes often attend to ceremonies held there or come to these places to seek healing or guidance. Some of these holy places are:

**High-Priestess’ Palace at Ro-Obiss.** The great stone building is of Dreamlord origin. It houses the High-Priestess and many of her advisors as well as ancient scrolls and wisdom.

**The Thooh’sa pyramids of Ro-Obiss.** The pyramids (Three of them) enhances Healing, Curses and The Mind. Each different. Used on an everyday basis by people.

**LiManch Monastery and the LiManch Groove.** Education centre of the priestesses and forbidden land to all males. The groove where the peninsula that holds the monastery meets the land is used for fertility rites that the neighbouring tribes flock to.

**Torain Cave.** Entrance to the Earth Mother’s Womb. The ratour des pajé mass ceremony is held in mid auss, when people pass down to the subterranean lake to bathe and then emerge as new born children of the Earth Mother.)

**Beaches of Mervis.** Sleeping upon stones and burying them in the sand grants wishes.

**The Obiss ruins.** A mixture of holy and unholy ruins of Dreamlord origin. Many Dreamlord artefacts for good or evil are kept here. Many secrets are stored or studied at Obiss.

**Lambruh temples of Ros-Boohr and Boohra.** Schools for tribesmen to study and practice their respir (signature) skills and learn how to avoid and recognise evil spirits.

**Obelisk of Dobharah.** Old bronth carvings that clears and relieves minds. Brings understanding of the Earth Mother’s balance. Ceremonies in eris.

**The Pel-Akuta Fallos.** A great rite during mid crith where the great pillar becomes charged with isho. Participants gain great luck, strength and sexual power.

Religion is a great part of everyday life. Deeds, goods, people, journeys and food are all blessed by certain spirits or deities. Small offerings of goods, song, praise or deeds are done to make sure the life continues to be favourable. Everyone is taught the delicate balance of nature, including the sho-sen (Seen as part of Her Breath). Toppling the balance brings on the wrath of the Earth Mother. Sustaining the balance means everything to Ros Crendorians. It could be politics, a sick child or tribal boundaries. If one maintains the Earth Mother's balance, she will watch over you and keep you safe, just as she does with the rest of her children. Humans, unlike animals and plants, have a choice. They can turn away from the Earth Mother to heed the words of their original creators. If they do this, the world (The Earth Mother's body) will not house them and it will be their enemy.

During auss many members flock to the Torain Cave to join the ceremony called "Ratour des Pajé", (Return to the Land). The High Priestess leads this ceremony where males and females are separated and led into antediluvian caves in order to "return to the Earth Mother". It works like a kind of baptism and confirms the faith of the tribes and heals them from worldly and spiritual pain. The mass gathering also works as a perfect opportunity to trade, solve disputes and arrange marriages in front of the watchful eyes of the priestesses.

Many of the tribes, especially the Uritay and Mayne, perform The Song, during mid-eris. It is a song to please the Earth Mother and ensure rich crops and bountiful game.



*Agari condrij*

## THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Strangers to the lands are normally reported or detained so that chieftains or the priestesses can choose what to do with them. Normally they will be escorted out of the realm, however, not all tribes are so lenient.

Ros Crendorians have a great reverence for bronth. Any bronth emissary/traveller/merchant/loremaster is granted traditional access to the lands through an ancient decree. Some exchange of lore still takes place between Dobre and Ros Crendor.

Jaspian, Burdothians and some Khodrens are allowed to trade in Ro-Obiss and other small ports along the north coast. The rulers of Ros Crendor prefer the larger organised klades or the strong Jaspian Trading Houses before small-time fortune seekers. Documents of passage grants ships access to certain ports. When travelling, a tattoo-stick (Pil depás), is needed. It is a small staff with symbols representing the local ruler's kree, safe passage and fransei words referring to the bearer and his quest.

The few muadra that have migrated into Ros Crendor, have all fled northward to the coast to avoid the weak, and sometimes draining sho-sen of the south. A few muadra joined these small communities during the worst persecutions in Burdoth, Khodre and Heridoth. Among these were caji who started spreading the Way of Gends among the muadra. Although a unique blend of caji/Ros Crendorian culture evolved, the cajs of Ros Crendor are so few that they are hardly noticed more than as Weavers of The Earth Mother's Breath. A few kerning bays have been set up in Ro-Obiss. Although dysha use is not banned in the cities, the kerning bays serve as a natural gathering place for muadra families and travelling caji.

### *What everyone knows*

Lepajé is the holy and sacred land of the Earth Mother. Nowhere is her power as strong, while her body as scarred. Her very heart beats in the ground for everyone to feel and her womb can be seen through all the entrances to the underworld. It was here that the Earth Mother gave birth to her first Children and it was here that they battled the evil Children of Her Cousins that came to ravage her body and all of her children.

All the tribes are united in their belief and their trust in the priestesses, the Daughters of the Earth Mother. All tribes will bleed for Lepajé and protect the Earth Mother. All tribes are proud boccord with more kree than any foreigner, deaf to the balance and laws of the Earth Mother, will ever have. All tribes would rather die than suffer the slavery of the spoilt fat men from the GranLaq (Great Lake in fransei).

The priestesses hear the whispers of the Earth Mother and know the balance and laws that she requires Mankind to abide. The priestesses are wise in the ways of healing and always know right from wrong. It is they who guide the tribes when they are lost. It is they who protect the tribes from the malicious children of the Earth Mother's cousins. It is they that know all the mysteries of the world. The priestesses can elect leaders, cure the terminally ill and curse all those who break the balance. If the priestesses demand a servant or take a husband from her wife, this is a great honour and one cannot come closer to the protection and love of the Earth Mother.

Places that are taboo are avoided at all costs and for good reasons. They are decorated with the bones and souls of the foolish. Only the priestesses can go there. Only the priestesses have the power to battle the evil Dreamlords. Only the priestesses know the true dangers involved. To go there means awakening the Dreamlords.

Evil sprits may whisper to you in your sleep or offer you great treasures. Nothing compares to the simple but happy lives of tribes. The greedy men of the Granlaq (Great lake) hear the calling of the Dreamlords and wish to enslave the tribes. They envy Lepajé and wish to steal it for themselves. They lust for the priestesses and their secrets. All foreigners encountered in Lepajé must be reported to those of Grankree or the priestesses. None may travel or live upon the holiest parts of the Earth Mother without the consent of Her Daughters.

## PLACES OF NOTE

### Ro-Obiss

Foreigners have long regarded Ro-Obiss as the capitol of Ros-Crendor. The Ros Crendorian tribes do not share this view. The town is still the residential home of the High Priestesses and all great assemblies of priestesses or Sajatists take place here. The town is normally off-limits to all foreigners that lack a pil depás. The town is built around thoo'sa pyramids and other great lamorri buildings. Crumbling city walls still stand from the age of the Dreamlords and the entire town is warp free and low with isho, like Ardoth. Great carved faces and ancient pillars rise from the green waters of the lake. The eastern half of the ancient city long before humans and bronth ever came here. With its elevated walkways, giant ruins and mighty thoo'sas, Ro-Obiss is a truly mysterious city.



It is said that the great halls of the palace are filled with secret passageways and hidden rooms. The palace guard consists of the greatest Korrum condrij who have sworn to protect the High-Priestess at all costs.

### Tallor and the Tallor Skyrealm

The city of Tallor lies beautifully nestled among red cliffs and an aerie forest of white trees. Its port is naturally shielded from the harsh crith storms from the Voslue Sea by a high reef and cliffs. The city itself is made out of stone or wooden buildings that spread out through the original forest without destroying it. Over the sea, opposite the city, floats a large skyrealm. This is the Tallor skyrealm, seat of the region's power and home of the Ros Crendorian Sijantists.

Tallor has the largest foreign influence of all Ros Crendorian towns. Even though some foreign merchants are allowed to travel to Ro-Obiss, it is here, in Tallor that they are allowed to build their own houses. While movement is restricted in Ro-Obiss it is

free in Tallor. In short – Tallor is the trading capitol of Ros Crendor. The Jaspian Trading Houses have their markets in Tallor, as have the klades from Khodre and Burdoth. Bronth scholars build their homes here and foreign mariners repair their ships in the harbour. The Jaspian, who were the first foreigners to the area, have been allowed to build a skyport atop the Tallor skyrealm and their influence can be felt throughout the whole town. It was the Jaspian who improved and fortified the harbour and brought new ideas to the Ros Crendorians.

The Tallor skyrealm is one of Jorune's largest, yet lowest skyrealms (large size usually means high altitudes due to mass of crystals), its bottom floating no more than 150 meters over the sea. During spells of low sho-sen (not uncommon in Ros Crendor) the skyrealm sometimes sinks so far down that its bottom dips into the sea.

The skyrealm has some shantic ruins at one end and several houses of the Pajé Protégé, the fairly new institute of the Sijantists, a skyport and Jaspian Trading Houses in the other end. It overlooks the city majestically and talmaron messengers frequently fly to and from the city. A great rope system of casket and dead weights transport people on and off the skyrealm to the reef below, although this system is not recommended during windy days.

A prophecy states that the Tallor skyrealm will one day fall into the sea and the priestesses have warned the people of Tallor not to build anything else on it.

### **Dobhara**

A simple port with a military outpost and a large population. The region is rich thanks to its fertile lands and abundance of game and a large portion of the Korrum tribesmen live around Dobharah. The town is one of the original bronth settlements and the bronth left a great obelisk behind when they left for new lands. The obelisk is carved with pictures of various sorts of game, spirits and religious symbols whose meaning is lost to time. Carvings of the long believed mythological tologra can also be found upon the pillar. The pillar is much worn and has actually cracked along the middle but is carefully held together with decorated strong ropes at the base. Bronth from Dobre sometimes stop in Dobharah to pray and marvel at the lost history of their kin. The Ros Crendorian priestesses conduct two great ceremonies at the base of the obelisk at sunset and sunrise on eris 47<sup>th</sup>, the traditional date when the bronth forsook the lands. The ceremony is supposed to bring enlightenment and clearness of thought to all who attend. The laws of nature and the balance of all things set out by the Earth Mother is said to reveal itself in dreams during the night between the ceremonies. Great masses of tribesmen and priestesses sleep around at during this night. Sijantists, members of KreeCoors or people with hard mental or moral tasks ahead often come by themselves to the obelisk to meditate upon their problems. It also said that the mentally ill can be healed if left to sleep in its shadow during mid-day.

### **Ros-Boohr and Boohr**

Old bronth ruins and graves dot the landscape around the ruins of their old settlements. The settlements themselves were very simple and left little remains, except for still standing sea walls and a temple or two. The tombs dug out of the hillsides hold the remains of the first bronth that settled the area. Most of these graves have long since been covered by dirt and dust and the softly rounded hills are normally covered by trees. The Ros Crendorian tribes of the area have always claimed that these old graves bring good luck and fertility. It is a grave sin to destroy or plunder them and it is very common that the trees and shrubs atop these hills are kept tidy and beautiful, much like parks. In both of these settlements there are Lambruh temples where priestesses

train in the arts of perception (lore about Dreamlord signs and respir skills). Many of the Korrum tribesmen come here to hone their respire skills before farsé and to learn about how to avoid evil spirits such as the Dreamlords. The foundations of these temples were built by the Lambruh sect that abandoned Ros Crendor in 939 PC, and left the guardianship of the lands in the hands of the newly formed boccord priesthood. These temples have been expanded, repaired and changed over the years by the Korrum tribes living in the area. All of them have foundation stones or halls in the centre that still bear the depictions made by the original bronth builders (although carefully restored now and again). It is with much joy and pride that the bronth scholars from Dobre have returned to study their lost past on the other side of the sea.

### **Makvar**

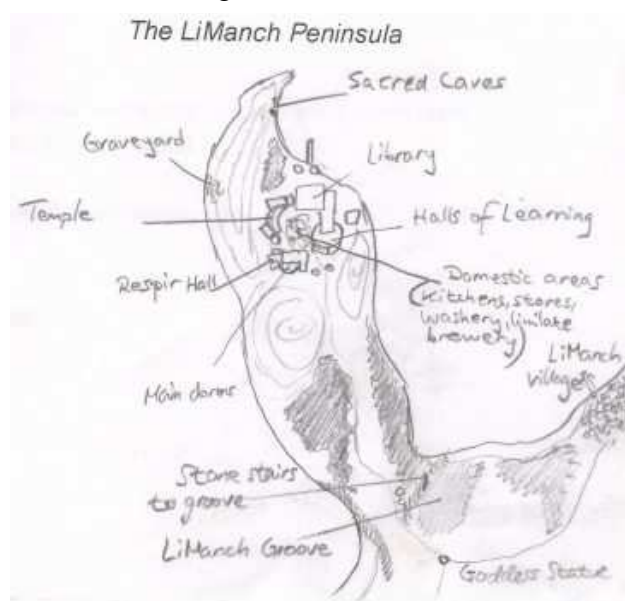
A small fortified town on the south-eastern sea coast of Ros Crendor. Situated at the mouth of the Makvar River it has a small port that supports its sturdy fishermen. The people of Makvar are known to be unfriendly and it is folly for foreigners to anchor there and attempt to trade with them. The people of Makvar live of the fish of the sea and the game of the deep forests that surrounds them. When times are bad they will raid the Coastal Kingdoms. Although the town of Makvar is small, a great number of tribesmen live in the surrounding forest lands and along the rivers of the region. When they muster to defend themselves or raid the Coastal Kingdom their numbers seem to swell beyond proportion. "A Makvar year" is in the Coastal Kingdoms synonymous with a bad year of crops and expected raids from Ros Crendor.

### **LiManch Monastery** (the Arm [of the Earth Mother])

Upon a peninsula of Lake Eelish lies an old monastery of stone and wood. It is the very heart of the Ros Crendorian clergy and the place where all priestesses receive their first training. A library holds copies of all the important books, scrolls, tablets and carvings found through Ros Crendor. It holds the accumulated knowledge of the entire Terrameer religion. Although most holy (or unholy) artefacts are kept in safer places, information about them will be found here. Except for priestesses of every age and rank, there are many female children that grow up here. Female children of the priestesses begin their training either with their wandering mothers or are sent here to

LiManch to grow up and start their learning early. Promising girls from various tribes are also sent here to learn and one day become priestesses. The reverend mother in charge of the LiManch Monastery, Corriss KreeVornn, rules it with an iron hand.

The entire peninsula with its buildings, respir chambers (isho signature skill training), limilate gardens and birthing houses are forbidden to all men. The punishment for a man trespassing upon the holy peninsula is death. Where the peninsula meets the mainland, a holy groove of trees





holds small altars and depictions of the Earth Mother. Fertility rites and marriages are conducted here. A local tribeswoman expecting a child may also come here to receive the aid of the priestesses. The small village beyond the grove supplies the priestesses with all the food they need.

### **Prison Mountain**

Originally an old Dreamlord structure, this dug-out mountain serves as the grimmest and darkest prison for all diyorda of Ros Crendor. Trespassing foreigners are quite often thrown into Grave Mountain to rot, unless they are killed by some of the more violent tribes on the spot. The Mountain has only one known entrance and several deep tunnels, shafts and chambers. Now window slits or air shafts seem to exist and it is a mystery where the air that flows through the tunnels comes from. The Ros Crendorians have for centuries added thick wooden doors, steel bars, shackles etc to the tunnel complex. Today it serves as last refuge for the damned and it is rare that prisoners ever see the sun again. As a ceremony, the diyorda are given one last full day of sun and air. After the sun sets they are brought into the Mountain, never to see the sun again. Important prisoners or foreigners quite often manage to get their relatives to pay a ransom for their release. Normal Ros Crendorians are not that lucky. Rumours abound among the poor souls trapped there, that there is an exit deep under the mountain. According to this rumour one first has to pass through the Halls of the Underworld, realm of the Dreamlords, and through several terrible traps, in order to see daylight again.

### **Lowater**

A small and quiet community that serves as the centre of the Crack Lands. Chieftains, priestesses and others with GranKree meet here to discuss matters that concern the region. The Lowater Lake is full of fish and provides lush vegetation that breaks the otherwise dry and more barren look of the Crack Lands.

### **Taree**

This river town is dependant upon the trade of the valued brynkwood. Fine brynkwood logs are transported down the Taba River and sold to Jasprians, Burdothians and Khodrens at Taree. The town is built on high cliffs overlooking the river mouth and the sea. Its position is easily defended from sea-borne attackers. The population consists mainly of Mayne tribesmen.

### **Savis**

The larger and older brother of Taree, Savis has a large port and a road connects it to the fertile riverlands and Lake Creidon to the south. All coastal trade in north-western Ros Crendor goes through Savis, making the people there rich. Jaspian Trading Houses have an outpost here and many Burdothian, Khodren, Dobren and Lunderan ships are in the port during the calmer eris and mullin seasons. The town itself is encircled by a small wall and most of the buildings are made out of wood from the nearby brynkwood forest. The lands surrounding Savis and along River Savis are very fertile and inhabited mainly by the Mayne tribes. The rivalry between the Mayne tribes and the Uritay tribes further south sometimes results in cattle theft and village raids. Savis has always been regarded as the stronghold of the much richer Mayne tribe.

### **Mervis**

One of the most strongly fortified towns of the region, Mervis is responsible for guarding the shores of Lake Creidon against the Khodrens. A great fort atop a hill overlooks the lake town and its bustling activity. Patrols from the forts travel up and down the lake shores and man the southernmost of the guard towers along the foothills of the Crendorian Mountains. The fairly strong garrison is however poorly disciplined. It is not in the nature of the Ros Crendorian tribes to have a strict military system. So, the condrij of Mervis spend a lot of time raiding their Mayne neighbours to the north.

The town of Mervis has a big market where goods from Khodre first enter Ros Crendor. Mervis is a natural choice for traders, who choose to cross Lake Creidon rather than trade with the hostile Manjere tribe further south. Priestesses watch over the market, filled with foreigners and try to keep the condrij of Mervis vigilant against trespassers continuing inland.

The nearby sandy beach of Mervis is often the home to small bands of tribesmen camping on the sand. According to ancient legends a stone can be placed under one's head when sleeping upon the beach. When the stone is buried in the sand the day after, a wish will come true.

### **Oborda**

Another town of the Uritay tribe, it attracts some Khodren traders. The townspeople of Oborda are, however, not as tolerant as those found in Mervis. They generally don't let foreigners stay after nightfall and only barter with traders that have earned some respect or kree among them. Obordans are simple fishermen who trade their catch for the produce of the Uritay farmers in the area. Life is slow and simple in Oborda.

### **Kerteyga**

Kerteyga is the stronghold of the Manjere tribes. The manjere Pajé Protégé, Jagar Majeer resides in the fortified city and rules supreme over all lands between the Pagra River and Lake Halvir. The Manjere tribes were once fierce headhunters and have learned all the bad habits from the civilised lands around them. They are corrupt, greedy and often organise raids into the Doben-al or into Khodre. The Red Guards of Jagar Majeer are no more than vicious thugs and bandits that terrorise both his own subjects and the neighbouring towns. In the fortified harbour of Kerteyga lies a great fleet of ships that slip away each night to attack smaller Khodren settlements in northern and southern Khodre. Jagar is not stupid and he knows that he is starting to arouse the anger of the now united Khodrens. Therefore, he sends his ships to the western parts of Lake Dau-Uh-dey, so that their pillaging can be blamed upon the Kask pirates. This has angered the pirate lord of Kask who is planning an attack upon Kerteyga. Saress Khodre suspects that the two pirate strongholds will soon fight this out and has her own plans how to rid Lake Dau-Uh-Dey of this scum.

### **Pel-Akuta**

Another manjere town, bordering the Land of the Acubon. It was fortified by the Khodrens when they occupied the strip of land along the lake shore. A fair sized harbour protects the fishing boats during nightfall and is always open to strangers in need of shelter. Acubon from the nearby acubon towns sometimes trade with the citizens of Pel-Akuta, as do Khodrens. The ruler of Pel-Akuta, Jarman Korr, is known to be a just and honourable man, an opposing figure to the corrupt Pajé Protégé that sits in Kerteyga. However, his power does not extend past the town Pel-Akuta and

traders cannot find a way to the inland regions without going past the Pajé Protegé to the north.

The priestesses that reside in the city will question all strangers that arrive and will encourage them to leave Ros Crendor as soon as their ships have been repaired or their goods sold.

The famous Pel-Akuta fallos stands just outside the city and attracts many of Manjere and Tokrem people in mid crith. During this time the sho-sen around the ancient 20 metre high fallos-shaped stone pillar becomes charged. Within a week it will attract an isho storm and charges will be seen running between the storm and the pillar. Before the storm abruptly ends, a warp will be seen atop the great pillar. It will remain open for less than 5 minutes before slamming shut again. The colourful display has attracted many iscin from Khodre, but none have so far been able to explain why the storm is created. Priestesses will hold a ceremony in front of the pillar during the storm. All that dare (as it is not risk-free with an isho storm close by) participate in the ceremony are rewarded with luck, strength and sexual powers. No strangers are allowed to participate and the priestesses will place guards around the pillar.

### **Maralco**

Maralco is a town that has been ravaged by both Khodrens and Ros Crendorians in the past. It lies on the border between the lands of the Manjere and Uritay tribal lands. The tribes have fought over the lands surrounding the Pagra River for centuries and it is the priestesses that keep the conflict to minimum levels. The town is built on the southern shore of the Pagra River, but a sturdy wooden bridge crosses the river from the north and enters the heart of the city. A great mound wall and wooden palisade encircles the town and most houses are made out of wood, with thatched low roofs. The townspeople of Maralco are of mixed descent and seem to be the only Uritay and Manjere tribesmen that can socialise without conflict. They would prefer if their kinsmen left Maralco alone. Ten large stone buildings can be found at the centre of the town. These were erected by the Khodrens that inhabited the town between 2883 to 2510 PC.

### **The Border Hill Forts**

Once built by Carisseans (now Khodrens) in 2482 PC to keep the boccord tribes from raiding Carissey, the forts were taken in 2542 PC by the fierce manjere tribes of western Ros Crendor. The High Priestess of Ro-Obiss entrusted the Manjere with guarding Ros Crendor's borders and keeping a vigilant watch from the Border Hill forts. The forts are actually strong towers built atop the ridges of a line of hills that run north to south within eyesight of the Lake Dau-Uh-Dey shore. The Manjere tribe are the most ruthless of all the Ros Crendorian tribes and they are to blame for much of the bad reputation linked to the realm. Once head-hunters and ritual cannibals, the Manjere patrol the south-western border against foreigners. Their capitol, Kerteyga, is corrupt and decadent port that rivals the power of Kask.

### **Artificial skyrealms**

In the ancient past, the Dreamlords crafted their own skyrealms and built great temples upon them. The reason for this is unknown, but arcane scripts in Obiss mention that the Dreamlords wished to capture the Breath of Earth Mother within these skyrealms and steal it from her. The creation of these skyrealms was done at the expense of the Old Ones, whose cities were destroyed. Many of these smaller skyrealms drift around in Ros Crendor or float motionlessly in the Dark Lands or in the Ring of Skyrealms

south of Ros Crendor. Most of these are taboo, while others are used by the priestesses who inhabit them. Sijantists border on the forbidden when they study these, but claim that there is a very distinct difference to their isho patterns, compared to natural skyrealms. Iscin of Jasp have long wanted to study the artificial skyrealms they know exist in southern Ros Crendor, but have so far not been allowed.

### The Dark Lands

Situated in southern Ros Crendor, this vast open valley houses many strange skyrealms. Most are normal floating hunks of rock and crystal, while others are flat like disks or long and thin like needles. This is the Dark Lands where many of the Dreamlords artificial skyrealms can be found. Most of them are topped with strange structures riddled with passageways and halls. Most of these skyrealms are taboo, while others have been cleansed a long time ago. These cleansed skyrealms are the home of some Farak families and priestesses. Their talmarons fly between the skyrealms and the Obiss Valley.

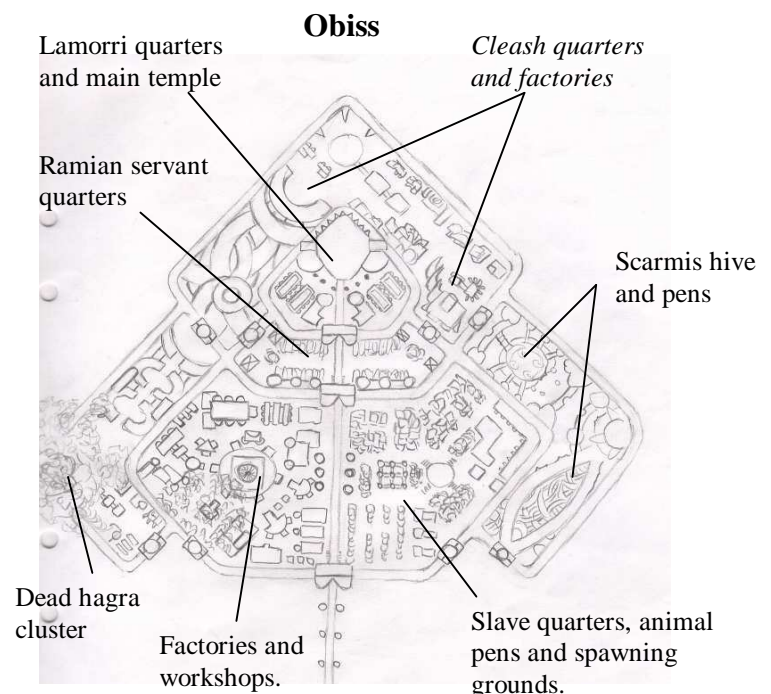
### Obiss

Obiss is one of Ros Crendor's most secret and important places. Its mere name is shrouded in mystery and most Ros Crendorians do not know where it lies or claim this when speaking to strangers. The barren Obiss valley contains the ruins of Obiss, which was one of the largest and greatest towns of the Dreamlords. Towering buildings and fallen monuments litter the valley. Nestled among the southernmost of these buildings is the town of Obiss, which is inhabited only by priestesses and their rare guests. The town has integrated man/bronth-made buildings with the original Dreamlord buildings. The resulting

appearance is that of ants building among the remains of a human home. Here priestesses research arcane and ancient lore to better know the enemy of the Earth Mother. The bravest among them prepare and train for their ventures into the Darkness and the underground realm of the Dreamlords.

Most of the Obiss valley has been "cleansed" thanks to the cooperation of one Dreamlord in the days the bronth lambruh inhabited the valley. According to legend, the Dreamlord helped the bronth to break the power of his brethren in return for a year of freedom in the flesh of an avatar (created by himself) and then final death. The Dreamlord had been so tired of his immortal prison that he chose a year of half-life of flesh instead of infinity. When the avatar withered and died the Dreamlord's spirit was no longer tied to the world and it returned to its creator among the stars.

Many of the dreaded secrets, lore and artefacts used by the priestesses against the Dreamlords originate from this time. The evil technology of the Dreamlords is being



used against them. However, it does worry the priestesses that the very powers to withstand the Dreamlords are based upon the teachings of a Dreamlord.

Great artefacts and arcane stone tablets of lore reside within the great halls of Obiss or among the ruins. Other more dangerous artefacts and even Dreamlord spirits have been imprisoned in great underground chambers of special construction and Obiss is sometimes referred to as the Spirit Prison. With great danger involved, some of these can be use or consulted, much like conjuring a demon. Much of the knowledge how to use the Dreamlord technology comes from Obiss and can still be found here.

If the iscins of the civilised world would discover what an ancient treasure-trove of forbidden lore resides in Obiss, they would flock to the valley. It is therefore the priestesses keep it secret.

The valley and the Obiss ruins are guarded jealously by the Tokrem tribe known as the Farak. It has been their holy duty to pursue and kill all trespassers that enter the valley without the permission of the priestesses. The Farak fly talmarons and inhabit some of the cleansed skyrealms of the Dark Lands. Great forts guard the narrow entrance to the Obiss valley entrance and Farak talmaron patrols are common in the valley and in the Dark Lands outside. Talmarons will, however, never fly further south than the great fort north of the Scorched Plains as the sho-sen is weak.

Although cleansed, Obiss is still a terrifying place. Priestesses have claimed to have seen ghosts and are sometimes plagued by Dreamlord spirits. Countless secret passageways, halls and other mysteries - good and terrible - await discovery.

### **The Obiss ruins**

The main bulk of the Obiss ruins lie in the innermost parts of the Obiss valley. Sheltered and hidden by the arms of the dark Mountains of the Howling Winds the ancient ruins look down upon the rest of the valley. Great carvings and scary monuments give the whole area a haunted appearance. Colossal, petrified bones of great machine beasts can be found among the ruins along with countless shantic skulls in deep chambers. Tremors are common and sometimes a great rumbling comes from deep underground. The ruins extend far underground and the priestesses are aware of great subterranean tunnels that probably connect several Dreamlord sites in or around Ros Crendor. Strange beasts or evil spirits sometimes drift up from this dangerous underworld and the priestesses often patrol the ruins and their deeper places.

### **Roads of the Dreamlords**

Just south of the Ros Crendor's southern border are four great roads created in the dawn of time by the Dreamlords. They look like great stone walls, towering more than five meters over the ground, and built with great stone blocks, too heavy for any creature to lift. These great walls are flat on the top and one can still see the impressions of parallel wells upon them. The sides of these great wall-roads are sometimes decorated with strange carvings or faces. Most of these are so eroded that one can only guess their appearance, which reminds men much of the visage of the ramian. One of the great Dreamlord roads runs from the southern border, under the Mountains of the Howling Winds and up to Grave Mountain. This road is taboo to travel upon, and the tribes are only allowed to cross it on certain places that have been cleansed by the priestesses.

### **Grave Mountain**

Much like Prison Mountain, this tunnel complex has been created inside a mountain. Contrary to Prison Mountain the halls of this accursed place is filled with noxious fumes, guard beasts and terrible traps. The damned spirits of the Dreamlords fly through the corridors howling in rage and it means the death of the soul to enter such a place. It is taboo to all but the priestesses, and they prefer not to enter this terrible place. Great raised roads of stone lead into the broad entrances to the mountain and several gigantic “windows” can be seen high upon the mountain side. The main entrances to Grave Mountain have been sealed by the priestesses a long time ago, but the windows high upon the mountain side are still open. From these one can often see thin trails of smoke or fumes.

### **Mount Dagorin**

Another haunted mountain with clear signs of Dreamlord habitation. It lies alone in the midst of the tall grass plain called The Green Sea and has an eerie brooding appearance with its great “window” slits in the mountain side. The evil spirit that resides there is said to be able to possess game animals and lures unwary or careless hunters to the mountain. The entire mountain is taboo and the priestesses have created several warnings in the form of skull, bone and rune sculptures.

### **The pyramids (thoo’sah)**

In Ro-Obiss, in central Doben-al and in some other places of Jorune (Ardoth and Sydra among these) lie huge stone pyramids without any clear intrance. They are often referred to by their ancient name, thoo’sah, but few know the purpose of the construction. When activated, the network of thoo’sah were supposed to accumulate isho for off-world transportation and charging of herded or artificial skyrealms. Only one part of the isho draining network was ever activated. This was in the Doben-al al. Once a lush and flourishing eco-system - now a barren and wasteland and isho desert. Three pyramids lie in Ro-Obiss, although only one of them is a thoo’sa.

### **The Ruins of the Scorched Plains**

Immediately south of Ros Crendor lies the Scorched Plains. Two watchtowers and a great fort guard the plains and the southern border of Ros Crendor. The full reason for this vigilance is known only to the priestesses. The dry and barren plains are totally devoid of life and mercilessly beaten by the strong sun. The rock seems to have been burnt or blasted by a terrible force and most of the plains are totally flat. In some places the rock itself seems to have been turned into glass, while in others it is split in deep cracks that seem to run deep into the very centre of the planet.

Four great roads of the Dreamlords run towards the middle of the Scorched Plains. There, nestled between five thin mountain spikes, lies a great Dreamlord city in ruins. This place is taboo for all but the most important priestesses, but its gargantuan buildings and carved mountain sides can be seen on clear days from the forts surrounding the Scorched Plains. The Tokrem tribes travel around the Scorched Plains and are mortally afraid of the cursed ruins at its centre. Eerie howls and strange lights are sometimes seen at night, while at day the heat of the plains make the cruel peaks look like a mirage.

### **Valley of Curses**

Situated just south of Ros Crendor, this valley is the source of many legends and much fear. Old shantic ruins dot the desolate canyon sides and floor. The remains of two shantic cities, several villages, temples and observatories lie in or beneath the canyon. Signs of great destruction can be seen and the normally subterranean shantic cities have been exposed to the elements, as if the very ground above them has been torn away. Many decorations of these dwellings have been altered or changed in horrible ways, so that they instead depict gruesome half-shantic beasts. Legends speak of the great desecration of this place by the Dreamlords after they had enslaved the Old Ones. Foul beasts, isho ghosts, evil spirits and eerie lights can be encountered in this accursed place. Now and again a lone shanta will be seen in the area. If it ever speaks to any of the tribal hunters of lands it will be words of great sorrow and pain after having visited the desecrated canyon.

### **The Great Pyramid**

Although not situated in Ros Crendor, the priestesses regard the place taboo and make great tiresome journeys into the deep desert to watch over it.

### **The Ring of Skyrealms**

The Great Pyramid has many strange effects upon the surrounding lands. The ring of skyrealms is one of these bizarre effects. Hundreds of skyrealms of different sizes (most of them very small or even boulder sized) circle the pyramid site in a great ring, approximately 200 km in diameter. A skyrealm will complete a circle in 183 days and from their elevated position, one can see the Great Pyramid itself. The bravest deep desert Tokrem tribes and some priestesses use these skyrealms as transportation when crossing the eastern part of the deep Doben-al desert from south-east to north-west. The ring itself does not extend into Ros Crendor, but all the Tokrem tribes know about it and see it as the boundary between the Living World and the Cursed Underworld of the Dreamlords.

The majority of the skyrealms are so small that they sink to the ground during night when the desert temperatures drop down to freezing. During the day the heat of the sun elevates them and lifts them up. Many of the skyrealms bump into each other or land on top of each other as the smaller ones are ground before the larger one that still keep moving. The largest skyrealms remain afloat during all times, except when there is a great isho drain originating from the pyramid. Normally after very low isho weather (yes, it is possible to some days worse than others in the Doben-al.) After an isho surge the skyrealms will rise quickly, the largest reaching altitudes of 2 km before they start dropping again. This pulsating movement can be noticed by everyone staying long on or near the skyrealms. To a caji or anyone else studying the sho-sen is quickly becomes evident.

The largest skyrealms are inhabited by various desert denizens. Some of these are the gruesome creatures left behind by the Dreamlords, such as the perann creatures. Other skyrealms are infested with croid, scrade or other pests. A couple of the larger skyrealms have shantic ruins, no more than blasted rubble, while others have scary Dreamlords ruins. An expert on skyrealms (such as some Jaspian crystal schooner captains) would notice that quite a few of the skyrealms seem to be a mix of different qualities of rock and crystal. Some even have large metal rods shot through them. These are the remains of artificial skyrealms, created by the Dreamlords for export off-world and “herded” to this place where they are charged.



### **Forest of Stone**

The area between the Pagra Mountains and the Mountains of the Howling Winds is referred to as the Forest of Stone. Twisted and petrified remains of trees fill the great dusty valley. Most of them only broken pillars, some still resemble the great brynkwood trees that stood here. It is a dusty and desolate place, which the black Mountains of the Howling Winds loom over menacingly. The howl of the high mountain winds can be clearly heard while in the valley. It is unknown what great disaster destroyed this forest, but the war between the Old Ones and the Dreamlords is generally blamed. The few travellers that use the dusty road that runs through the valley tend to hurry past the twisted trees of stone as fast as they can. The road through the Forest of Stone, the Scorched Plains, and the Dark Lands is the most central route if one wishes to travel from the east coast to Lake Dau-Uh-Dey. However, most people prefer to use the longer northern road through the Crack Lands. In reality, only the tribal patrols, priestesses and their entourage travel these roads to and from the Obiss ruins.

### **Firewater swamp**

Forewater swamp has earned its name from the Dreamlord ruins at its centre. Pools of green liquid seems to generate here and foul insects lay their eggs and spawn in it. For those that dare the strange insectoid beasts of the swamp, there is the chance to refine the green liquid. If cleaned of debris and insects it is highly volatile and burns brightly. The Erucians of old sometimes used to barter for the Green Firewater. It is unknown what they used it for, but the lighthouses of Ro-Obiss use it to light the way for mariners. Its bright shine can be seen over great distances and iscin have always been interested in its creation.

### **Darkwater swamp**

Just like the Firewater swamp, the Darkwater swamp is filled with foul and dangerous creatures. As the surrounding landscape is dry and barren, most animals are lured to the bountiful shrubs and water that can be found here. While most of the fauna of Darkwater swamp are indigenous to Joruen (such as farg, nemsis, kocrébon etc) there are other stranger beasts, progeny of the Dreamlords. The swamp has earned its name from the murky and muddy dark waters that seem like bottomless pits. A foul tar-like stench can sometimes be felt close to the swamp. At these times many of the larger creatures of the swamp seem to migrate away from the centre for a period of weeks. A great Dreamlord road leads straight into the swamp. It and the ruins at the centre are taboo to all members of the Ros Crendorian tribes.

## THE DREAMLORDS

During the occupation of sho-caudal, the lamorri were most active in what was to become the Doben-al and Ros Crendor since it was rich in the isho and skyrealms they sought to pillage from the world. It was in the Doben-al the lamorri made their first bases and later their towns and experimental factories. Their dreaded machine-beasts destroyed the vegetation and countless slave-races toiled to build them their monuments. The whole ecosystem slowly shifted to suit the lamorri and many species of flora and fauna were driven to extinction. Experiments with isho were conducted and isho (often in the form of skyrealms) was being prepared to be shipped off-world. Artificial isho and artificial skyrealms were created and great isho wells constructed. This slowly emptied and killed the land, making it an isho desert as well as a physical one.

When the final shantic rebellion succeeded, some of the lamorri escaped the evids and the shantic warriors by fleeing deep underground. Since isho did not exist or was destroyed in the deep bases of the lamorri, shantas and evids could not see them or harm them. Also, the artificial isho and the countless bioweapons and isho weapons constructed to destroy shantic life protected the surviving lamorri. The slave races, however, turned on their old masters and went where the shanta could not. Deep inside the bowels of the earth they fought terrible battles against their former masters and managed to destroy them.

However, the lamorri managed to cheat death. Through unknown ways and advanced dark technology the dying lamorri preserved their personalities or essences in great temple-sized devices kept underground. They acted like brain amplifiers or bizarre brain duplicators that would copy and preserve the personalities of their creators. Even though their bodies had been destroyed, the lamorri could continue to influence their slaves or even possess them. This was easiest done when the victim could not easily defend himself, during sleep, intoxication or derangement.

The shantas and the slaves fled as far away from the tendrils of the foul spirits that now inhabited the land as they could. The land was named Doben-al (Great Emptiness) and was forever to be shunned by all intelligent living things.

Over the millennia the wills and the minds of the long gone rulers of the land turned upon themselves. They had no creatures to dominate and enslave. No flesh to use as their own bodies. Their minds devoured themselves and became twisted, confused and psychotic. They transformed from xenomorphic and selfish entities to pure evil and malicious spirits with incoherent thoughts.

The first bronth settlers noticed these semi-dormant entities and gave them their names; the Dreamlords. The bronth later warned the boccord tribes that migrated to the area and taught them what they had learned from the warnings among the shantic temples. The priestesses of the boccord assumed the role of wardens or protectors against this evil as the bronth departed for Crendor and Dobre.

For reasons unknown, women can resist the lure and possession of the Dreamlords better than men. This has further strengthened the matriarchy, which has used the lamorri secrets and artefacts to their advantage.

[See *Lamorri* essay for more details.]

## **THE EELSHON SHE-EVID**

While the great evid roams the world, warp-walking from one isho storm to another, it is a little known fact that it often returns to Ros Crendor. As its purpose was to find and destroy lamorri and their constructs, the subterranean activity in Ros Crendor attracts it. This is especially true when people meddle with lamorri-tech and stir the ancient lamorri “spirits” of the land. The great evid has been spotted on several occasions and figures frequently in the legends and tales of the land. Often referred to as the Earth Mother’s Rage or simply The Rage, it is known as the protector of tombs and slayer of the Unfaithful. Other evids can be also found in Ros Crendor. Some trapped as sentinels in ancient ruins or unleashed by the shanta into the land.